The area of Bt. Cotton has increased from 0.70 lakh acres in Kharif, 2002 to 2.3 lakh acres in Kharif, 2003 and further increased to 12.00 lakh acres in the Kharif, 2004.

Spraying of coca cola on crops as pesticides

†844. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that farmers in certain districts in Andhra Pradesh are spraying coca cola cold drink as a pesticide for the protection of their crops;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the crops are being protected by the above mentioned spraying method?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has informed that a few farmers in Asifabad Division of Adilabad District in the State have tried to control pests on cotton crop during Kharif, 2004 by spraying coca cola. However, no scientific study has been conducted to confirm the efficacy of coca cola in pest control.

Sreamlining NAIS

845. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of provisions of the Crop Insurance Scheme in India and various situations and conditions under which farmers could become beneficiaries of this scheme;

(b) whether farmers in various States are opposing this scheme in view of its failure to protect their interests;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the remedial measures taken, so far, and measures proposed to be implemented to streamline the scheme;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) whether Government are seriously contemplating to amend the Act of Crop Insurance Policy in the best interest of the farmers;

(e) if so, by when; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) is being implemented in the country from rabi 1999-2000. According to the scheme, if the actual yield per hectare of the insured crop for the defined area in the insured season falls short of the specified threshold yield all the insured farmers growing that crop in the defined area become eligible for the indemnity claims. Main features of the scheme are given with Statement. (*See* below)

(b) to (f) During the last nine crop seasons (from Rabi 1999-2000 to Rabi 2003-04) 462 lakh farmers have been covered over an area of 473 lakh hectares insuring a sum of Rs. 40272.81 crore. Total claims amounting to Rs. 4751.77 crore have become payable as against the premium of Rs. 1242.65 crore and about 1.58 crore farmers have been benefited under NAIS.

Some suggestions like timely settlement of claims, smaller unit area of insurance, coverage of perennial crops etc. have been received from time to time from different quarters. To examine these suggestions and to make the scheme more attractive to the farmers, a Joint Group has been set up to study the improvements required in the existing crop insurance schemes. The Group is yet to submit its Report.

Statement

Main features of National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS)

- The Scheme is voluntary for the States/UTs.
- Scheme is available to all farmers—loanee and non-loanee both-irrespective of their size of holdings.
- Compulsory for loanee farmers and optional for non-loanee farmers.
- Sum-insured may extend up to the value of threshold yield of the area insured.

- Coverage of all food crops (cereals, millets and pulses), oilseeds and annual commercial/horticultural crops in respect of which past yield data is available for adequate number of years.
- Amount the annual commercial/horticultural crops, eleven crops namely cotton, sugarcane, potato, chillies, ginger, onion, turmeric, jute, tapioca, annual banana and pineapple are presently covered.
- Basically all-risk insurance scheme covering all yield losses due to non-preventable natural risks.
- Premium rates are 3.5% for bajra and oilseeds, and 2.5% for other Kharif crops, 1.5% for wheat, and 2% for other rabi crops.
- In case of annual commercial/horticultural crops, actuarial rates of premium are charged.
- Small and marginal farmers are provided 50% subsidy on the premium charged from them. The subsidy is to be phased out over a period of 5 years on sunset basis.
- Financial liabilities are shared between the Central Government and the State/UTs. on 50:50 basis.

Supply of Spurious Bt. cotton seeds

846. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a Multinational Private Company Mahyco had been supplying inferior quality of Bt. Cotton seeds in Andhra Pradesh leading to total crop loss;

(b) if so, the details thereof with regards to Andhra Pradesh and all other States where such inferior quality of Bt. cotton seeds are supplied by Mahyco and other Multinational companies;

(c) the details of action taken so far, against these companies supplying Bt. Cotton seeds in India; and

(d) the details of action taken so far, for compensating such loss of the farmers of Andhra Pradesh and other States?